Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TRIEST 00211 021324Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00
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TO AMEMBASSY ROME
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C O N F I D E N T I A L TRIESTE 0211
E.O.: 11652; GDS
TAGS: PINT, IT
SUBJ: BUSY AUTUMN AHEAD FOR THE DC IN FRIULI
AND THE VENETO
1. SUMMARY. THIS AUTUMN PROMISES TO BE ONE OF THE MORE FRENETIC IN SOME YEARS FOR THE NORTHEASTERN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS (DC). IN FRIULI-VENEZIA GIULIA, DC PROVINCIAL CONGRESSES ARE SCHEDULED FOR GORIZIA, TRIESTE AND UDINE WHOSE OUTCOMES WILL DETERMINE IN LARGE MEASURE TACTICS AND STRATEGY IN THE TRIESTE ELECTIONS THIS FALL AND THE 1978 REGIONAL ELECTIONS. IN THE VENETO, VENICE HOLDS ITS PROVINCIAL CONGRESS IN OCTOBER WHEN THE DOROTEO (FERRARI-AGGRADI ET. AL.) AND THE FORZE NUOVE (MARINO CORTESE ET. AL.) FACTIONS WILL BE PITTED AGAINST EACH OTHER FOR CONTROL OF THE PARTY ORGANIZATION. THESE CONGRESSES ARE MAJOR TESTS AS WELL OF THE

PAGE 2 RUFLSHA0067 C O N F I D E N T I A L
DC'S ABILITY AND WILL TO RENEW ITSELF. RECENT STRAWS IN THE WIND MAY SUGGEST TO SOME IN THE DC THAT THE PARTY IS RECOVERING LOST GROUND OR AT LEAST HOLDING ITS OWN, AND IT IS UNCLEAR THEREFORE HOW CONVINCING AND COMPELLING THE RENEWAL ARGUMENT WILL BE WITH OR AGAINST THE OLD GUARD AT THIS TIME. END SUMMARY.
2. GORIZIA/TRIESTE: PROVINCIAL CONGRESS IN GORIZIA SET FOR JULY SEEMS TO BE LITTLE MORE THAN FULFILLING PARTY STATUE REQUIREMENTS, AND NO SURPRISES ARE EXPECTED BY THAT SMALL DC ORGANIZATION. IN
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PAGE 02 TRIEST 00211 021324Z

TRIESTE IN SEPTEMBER HOWEVER, THE DC MUST TAKE SOME HARD DECISIONS ON HOW BEST TO DEAL WITH THE OSIMO QUESTION IN A STATESMANLIKE MANNER AND STILL HANG ON TO CITY HALL IN THE NOVEMBER COMMUNAL ELECTIONS.
3. THIS WILL BE NO EASY TASK. THE SO-CALLED CIVIC LIST SEEMS DETERMIED TO PUNISH THE DC FOR OSIMO. IT WILL ENTER THE ELECTIONS TO TAKE VOTES FROM THE DC AND IN THE PROCESS HELP THE

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COMMUNISTS. THE PROSPECT IS YET ANOTHER SOCIALIST-COMMUNIST
ADMINISTRATION IN A MAJOR ITALIAN CITY.
4. AT THE SAME TIME LOCAL DC LEADERS NOTABLY CORRADO BELCI
HAVE SHOWN SURPRISING COURAGE IN FACING UP TO THE ISSUE AND
THEIR EFFORTS MAY BE PAYING OFF. AS FOR CONTROL OF THE TRIESTE

PAGE 3 RUFLSHA0067 C O N F I D E N T I A L
PARTY, THAT SEEMS FIRMLY IN MOROTEI HANDS AND THERE SEEMS TO BE
NO SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGE AT THIS TIME TO COLONI, BELCI, RINALDI,
ET. AL.
5. UDINE: THE LARGE UDINE DC ORGANIZATION--ONE OF THE MOST
POWERFUL IN THE NORTHEAST --HOLDS IT CONGRESS IN OCTOBER. THE
USUAL SKIRMISHING BETWEEN THE FORZE NUOVE FORCES--SENATOR TOROS
AND DEPUTY SANTUZ--AND THE MOROTEI FORCES- REGIONAL PRESIDENT
AND SENATOR TONUTTI--HAS ALREADY STARTED. TOROS HAS CALLED FOR
RENEWAL OF THE PARTY. THE MOROTEI ARE SILENT FOR THE TIME BEING.
WHAT IS REALLY ON EVERYONE'S MINDS HOWEVER, BESIDES THE TRIESTE
ELECTIONS, IS THE REGIONAL ELECTIONS SCHEDULED FOR 1978. THESE
ELECTIONS WILL BE A SIGNIFICANT FIRST TEST FOR THE DC SINCE 1976
AND WILL INVOLVE FOUR PROVINCES AND SOME 900,000 VOTERS--ABOUT
2.5 PERCENT OF ITALIAN VOTERS.
6. THE OUTCOME OF ELECTIONS WILL TURN ALMOST SOLELY ON VOTER
PERCEPTIONS OF HOW WELL THE DC HAS DONE SINCE THE EARTHQUAKE.
AFTER A SHAKEY START, THE DC HAS DONE QUITE WELL. BUT IT MUST DO
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PAGE 03 TRIEST 00211 021324Z

MUCH MORE IF IT IS TO HEAD OFF NASCENT EMIGRATION WHICH COULD BE
TRIGGERED BY A LAGGARD RECONSTRUCTION PROGRAM. ROME HAS THE
WHEREWITHAL--LAWS AND MONEY--TO BE HELPFUL, AND THE US AID

PAGE 4 RUFLSHA0067 C O N F I D E N T I A L
PROGRAM WILL ALSO BE USEFUL IN THE REGARD.
7. VENICE: VENICE HOLDS IT FIRST PROVINCIAL CONGRESS IN FOUR
YEARS IN OCTOBER. THE 1973 CONGRESS ENDED IN A VICTORY FOR FERRARI-
AGGRADI AND HIS DOROTEI SUPPORTERS. BUT THE INTERVENING YEARS
SAW DC LOOSES ON THE DIVORCE QUESTION AND THE 1975 ELECTIONS
(42 VENICE COMMUNES HAVE SOCIALIST/COMMUNIST ADMINISTRATIONS)--
TWO REASONS WHY FORZE NUOVE LEADER MARTINO CORTESE IS NOW
PROVINCIAL PARTY SECRETARY. WHILE STILL NO PUSHOVER, FERRARI-
AGGRADI CLEARLY DOES NOT COMMAND THE POWER HE DID FOUR YEARS AGO,
AND IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN IF THERE IS ANYONE OF HIS CALIBER TO
STEP INTO THE DOROTEI SHOES IN VENICE.
8. COMMENTS: REFORM AND RENEWAL WERE THE THEMES OF THE LAST DC
NATIONAL CONGRESS. MUCH ATTENTION IS PAID TO BOTH BY THE LOCAL
ORGANIZATIONS BUT IN FRIULI THE ISSUE IS NOT THE CONTINUING
EXISTENCE OF THE "CORRENTI" AND THEIR LEADERS, BUT THE EARTHQUAKE,

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

ITS AFTERMATH AND THE OSIMO TREATY. THESE WILL COMMAND MOST OF
THE DC ENERGIES. IN THE VENETO, THE "CORRENTI" ARE HEALTHY.
THE DC HAS AN ABSOLUTE MAJORITY, AND ITS STRENGTH IS ITS GREATEST
BURDEN. MOST OF THE PARTY'S ENERGIES ARE DEVOTED TO QUELLING THE
INTERNECINE SQUABBLING. IT IS BARELY SUCCESSFUL IN DOING SO, VIC.,

PAGE 5 RUFLSHA0067 C O N F I D E N T I A L
THE PROLONGED CRISIS IN THE VENETO REGIONAL GIUNTA, WHERE THE DC
HAS AN ABSOLUTE MAJORITY BUT WAS UNABLE TO PUT TOGEATHER A
GOVERNMENT UNTIL JUST RECENTLY. PRESENT INDICATIONS ARE THERE-
FORE THAT THE DC IN THE NORTHEAST IS IN PRETTY GOOD SHAPE BUT
IS PRINCIPALLY SEIZED OF SHORT-TERM CONCERNS AND IS NOT FOCUSING
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PAGE 04 TRIEST 00211 021324Z

ON LONG-TERM ISSUES. MOEN.

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Message Attributes

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